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## Preface

The papers included in this special volume represent a selection of contributions to the conference “Optimal Discrete Structures and Algorithms” (ODSA 2000), which took place September 11–13, 2000, at the University of Rostock, Germany.

On the one hand, the spectrum of topics was influenced by the main working areas and interests of the Guest Editors—Combinatorics and Optimization (K. Engel and R. Labahn), Discrete Mathematics (H.-D.O.F. Gronau), and Theoretical Computer Science (A. Brandstädt). On the other hand, the topics were chosen in order to improve the communication between specialists in related areas, like design theory, Sperner theory, polyhedral combinatorics, and algorithmic graph theory.

About 70 mathematicians from 15 countries participated. The success of ODSA '97, the preceding conference in 1997, encouraged the Guest Editors to organize this conference, and to continue this series in a few years.

We would like to thank the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, the Kultusministerium des Landes Mecklenburg- Vorpommern and the Institute of Combinatorics and its Applications for supporting the conference, Peter L. Hammer and the helpful staff in the Editorial Office for publication of this special volume of Discrete Applied Mathematics, and last but not least the numerous referees.

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